

WASHINGTON, DC - Yesterday, Congressman Rob Wittman joined members from both sides of the aisle to vote in favor of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009. The bill contained a provision providing for a Northern Neck National Heritage Area Study which would direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Northern Neck National Heritage Area in Virginia. The legislation was previously introduced by the late Rep. Jo Ann Davis.

"I was glad to cast my vote in favor of the Omnibus Land bill to help preserve and protect the unique nature of the Northern Neck," said Wittman.

"This is an issue which has been a priority for the First District for some time, and it is my hope that when this bill comes around for a second vote, we will be able to pass it with continued bipartisan support," said Wittman.

National Heritage Areas expand on traditional approaches to resource stewardship by supporting large-scale, community centered initiatives that connect local citizens to the preservation and planning process. The National Park Service (NPS) provides technical, planning and limited financial assistance to National Heritage Areas. The NPS is a partner and advisor, leaving decision-making authority in the hands of local people and organizations.

A majority of House members supported the wilderness bill, but the measure was defeated because it did not receive the needed two-thirds vote. The vote was 282-144 in favor - two votes short of approval.

Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He was elected to his first full term in November 2008 and serves on the Natural Resources Committee and the Armed Services Committee where he is the Ranking Member of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.